

NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

Conference Call Summary Monday, February 27, 2012 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

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Roll Call

Monica Rodia, Executive Secretary of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC), welcomed the members to the teleconference and took roll.

January Business Meeting Minutes

Monica reported that the January business meeting minutes have been reviewed, finalized and distributed to the TSC members and are now part of the official record. Members who are unable to attend a teleconference should visit the website to read the past minutes.

Caucus Report Outs

Jeff Mears reported that the Tribal Caucus has been reviewing the TSC Organizational Overview document and has revised the mission statement. The next step is to review the goals. There has been a low turnout for the Tribal Caucus calls, and Jeff has sent an e-mail to the Tribal Caucus members to determine whether there is a better day/time to meet.

Ted Coopwood explained that the EPA Caucus also is examining the TSC Organizational Overview document from a fresh perspective, with the goal of updating it to reflect the current status of the TSC. The EPA Caucus also has been examining the framework for implementing the Tribal Science Priorities (TSPs) within the Agency, including determining what TSP implementation means as an Agency and as individual offices. The TSC and the Agency must devise a strategy to move the process forward to implement the TSPs in regions and program offices. The EPA Caucus is examining the best method to accomplish this while considering the complexities of the issues surrounding the two TSPs and the current economic climate. The EPA Caucus also has been discussing the upcoming face-to-face meeting, including how it will flow and ideas for content.

TSC Spring Business Meeting

Ted reported that the spring business meeting would be held June 12–14, 2012, and asked whether there were any issues with these dates; there were none. Monica explained that Donna Jackson had provided her with cost estimates for the potential locations that the members had suggested during the December 2011 face-to-face meeting. The three lowest cost options were Sparks, Nevada; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Palm Springs, California. Donna reported that the daily government hotel per diem for the Sparks location is \$93, and the meeting would be held at a nonhotel facility. The daily hotel per diem for the Las Vegas location is \$99. The Palm Springs location daily hotel per diem is \$82, but airfares may be more expensive, and a nonhotel facility would be used for the meeting.

John Mosley stated that the Region 9 Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) meeting will be held in Reno, Nevada, in August 2012, and the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa committed to providing the meeting rooms at no cost if the RTOC filled a 50-room block. The only cost for the meeting rooms would be for audio-visual needs. Monica reported that the ecoAmbassadors would be providing a report out at the TSC business meeting, which possibly could guarantee a 50-room block. Donna will explore this new option. Monica asked John if his tribe could organize a tour for the TSC if it did not have the capacity to host two meetings so close to each other. John said that the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe would be enthusiastic about organizing a tour so that the TSC members could observe the work that the tribe is performing. In response to a question from Ken Bailey, John explained that the locations of the major solar projects were too far to arrange a tour, but the TSC members could observe the solar arrays on the tribal buildings. In response to a question from Ted, Jeff and the Tribal Caucus agreed that the Reno location could be considered as the priority location for the spring face-to-face meeting. In response to a

question from Monica, John agreed that he and Tia Chullakorn would serve as the main contacts for the spring face-to-face meeting in Region 9.

Preparation for the TSC Spring Meeting

Monica explained that during the December 2011 face-to-face meeting, members had requested that a training component be included in the spring face-to-face meeting. Ted highlighted the proposed agenda items for the face-to-face meeting. The TSC must develop a framework for how to move forward with implementing the TSPs; the goal is to develop a working draft of this framework by the end of the meeting that everyone is comfortable with. It is important to note that the framework must be a flexible, “living” document.

Another major agenda item includes the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program. The program is providing the TSC a unique opportunity to incorporate the TSPs into its program. ecoAmbassadors will be present to highlight the work that they are performing and have offered the TSC a chance to be involved at the ground level of the program. Marissa McInnes reported that she met with Michelle DePass the previous Friday about the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program, and she is moved by the work being accomplished. There will be powerful results from the program that the researchers are excited to share with the TSC. Because of the ecoAmbassadors’ school schedules, they need to ensure that they are gone only briefly from their institutions. They requested that the plenary and poster sessions be held on the same day so that they can attend easily. Patti Tyler thought that a poster session would be valuable, particularly as it has been a long time since the TSC face-to-face meeting included such a session. Ted said that inclusion of a poster session had been discussed previously, and it will provide the ecoAmbassadors with the ability to interact tangibly with the TSC members. Monica asked about the projects for the next round of ecoAmbassadors applications. Marissa explained that the goal was for the announcement for applications to be released by the end of March 2012 or early April 2012 at the very latest. The application process could be explained at the face-to-face meeting. Monica added that it was important for the TSC to develop relationships and explore partnership opportunities so that projects during the next round of ecoAmbassadors could incorporate the TSPs of climate change and traditional ecological knowledge.

Ted stated that training would be incorporated into the agenda for the face-to-face meeting. The EPA Caucus determined that the best use of EPA Caucus time during the meeting would be cultural, treaties and law training. A possible training for the Tribal Caucus could focus on grant writing tools. He asked that the Tribal Caucus members determine what type of training would be most useful for them and to inform Ted so that he could begin developing the training. The final agenda item for the meeting is TSC discussion of the Organizational Overview document to ensure that it represents the current reality of the TSC and where the Council is headed.

Ted requested feedback on the suggested meeting topic areas and potential agenda items. TSC members can provide input to Jeff, Ted or Monica.

Marissa asked when a final agenda would be available to share with the members of the Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program. Ted said that it would be necessary for him, Jeff and Monica to discuss the agenda before releasing a tentative agenda. Monica said that it would be helpful for Marissa to determine the best day for the ecoAmbassadors to present so that their sessions can be incorporated into the agenda.

Update on Region 8 Regional Operations Committee (ROC) Meeting and Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program

Patti reported that Region 8 will be hosting a Tribal Leaders Summit with the Region 8 RTOC, which is called the ROC in Region 8, April 3–5, 2012, at the Region 8 office in Denver, Colorado. Mike Durglo will be presenting at the summit about TSC activities and the ecoAmbassadors Program.

Patti encouraged the TSC members to visit the ecoAmbassadors tribal website at <http://www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/tribal> so that they can be prepared to engage with the researchers during the face-to-face meeting. There are eight ecoAmbassadors projects: four in North Dakota, two in Montana and two in Arizona. Patti has been working with Marissa to ensure that the Region 8 points of contact are involved and provide the program with in-kind analytical services from the Region 8 laboratory and the Office of Research and Development laboratory in Ada, Oklahoma. Patti highlighted the eight ecoAmbassadors projects:

- Turtle Mountain Community College/Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (North Dakota): Monitoring drinking water from private wells.
- Tohono O’odham Community College (Arizona): Examining carbon-negative building products from recycled materials.
- Fort Berthold Community College (North Dakota): Monitoring hydraulic fracturing fluids in local wells.
- Fort Peck Community College (Montana): Developing an online epigenetics course and investigating epigenetics, obesity and toxics exposure.
- Candeska Cikana Community College/Spirit Lake Tribe Reservation (North Dakota): Developing a campus recycling sustainable program.
- Little Big Horn College (Montana): Assessing nonpoint sources on the Little Big Horn River.
- Diné College (Arizona): Examining participatory air quality monitoring.
- United Tribes Technical College (North Dakota): Developing a first-ever environmental engineering and design course.

Additional details about each of the above projects can be found in the project descriptions document at <http://www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/tribal/projectdescrip.pdf>. Patti asked the TSC members to familiarize themselves with the projects so that they could arrive at the spring face-to-face meeting prepared to engage in lively discussion with the tribal ecoAmbassadors. Many of the projects will be of interest to other tribal colleges and universities.

Ted asked Patti whether she had met with Peter Grevatt. Patti responded that she would be meeting with him later that day. Ted asked her to inform Peter about the projects and notify him that the TSC is working with the program. Patti said that it had been a pleasure working with Marissa. It is Marissa’s program, but Patti has been trying to ensure that Region 8 provides support to the six projects within the region when possible. Another benefit of the projects is that each of them includes a student learning component.

K–12 School Environmental Health Program for States, Tribes and Territories

Ted introduced Margot Brown, who explained that EPA established the Office of Children’s Health Protection (OCHP) in May 1997 to make the protection of children’s health a fundamental goal of public health and environmental protection in the United States. OCHP supports and facilitates Agency efforts to protect children’s health from environmental threats.

The Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 mandated the Agency to issue school site selection guidelines that account for the special vulnerability of children to hazardous substances or pollution exposures, as well as other issues. EISA also mandates that EPA, in consultation with other federal agencies, issue voluntary guidelines to assist states, tribes and territories with establishing school environmental health programs that support K–12 schools and school districts in creating safe, healthy and productive environments for students and school staff. In response to these mandates, the Agency released school siting guidelines during the fall of 2011 that help school districts and community members to evaluate environmental factors to make the best possible school siting decisions. EPA also has released for public comment guidelines for state school environmental health programs; the public comment period ends on April 13, 2012, and the guidelines will be finalized by the summer of 2012. This guidance will help states, tribes and territories establish and sustain K–12 school environmental health programs to support schools and school districts in creating healthy learning environments.

OCHP would like to receive feedback about the latter guidelines. Access to the guideline documents is available at EPA’s schools’ website at <http://www.epa.gov/schools>. Questions should be directed to Cindy Merse of OCHP (202-566-2970; merse.cynthia@epa.gov).

Ted said the goal is to provide an opportunity for the tribes to provide input on the guidelines to ensure that tribal children are protected in the school setting. He asked the Tribal Representatives to disseminate this information to the RTOCs and tribes in their regions so that they can provide input. Dennis O’Connor asked about using tribal consortia to disseminate the information. Ted agreed that this was a good idea. Dennis will send the list of tribal consortia to Cindy, Ted, Monica and Jeff.

Margo thanked the TSC for allowing her to present. Katie asked whether OCHP was working with the Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA). Margot responded that OCHP was working OITA. The development of the guidelines was a coordinated Agency effort, and every office with a schools program provided input before the guidelines were released for public comment.

Ken Bailey reported that the Bureau of Indian Education was instrumental in informing tribal schools about the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Program. Monica asked whether he had a contact within the bureau. Ken said that he would send the e-mail address of his contact to Monica.

Announcements

Ted reported that the next tribal consultation webinars regarding EPA’s *Climate Change Adaptation Plan* would be held on March 1 and 8, 2012.

Monica encouraged the Tribal Caucus members to participate in the Tribal Caucus teleconferences to revise the TSC mission statement, goals and organizational document. It is important that they “do their homework” and provide input to Jeff, even if they are unable to attend the teleconferences.

Ted thanked the members for participating and adjourned the conference call at 3:01 p.m.

Action Items

- ✧ Donna will explore the option of holding the TSC's spring face-to-face meeting in Reno, Nevada.
- ✧ The Tribal Caucus members will determine what type of training will be most useful for them during the face-to-face meeting and inform Ted of their choice(s).
- ✧ The TSC members will provide input regarding the proposed spring face-to-face meeting agenda items to Jeff, Ted or Monica.
- ✧ The TSC members will familiarize themselves with the various ecoAmbassadors projects prior to the spring face-to-face meeting.
- ✧ Patti will inform Peter of the ecoAmbassadors projects and the TSC's involvement.
- ✧ The Tribal Representatives will disseminate the information about public comment on the K–12 school environmental health program guidelines to their RTOCs and tribes within their regions.
- ✧ Dennis will send the list of tribal consortia to Cynthia, Ted, Monica and Jeff.
- ✧ Ken will provide Monica with his contact within the Bureau of Indian Education.

NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

CONFERENCE CALL

FEBRUARY 27, 2012

2:00 PM - 3:00 P.M. EASTERN STANDARD TIME

Call-in Number: **866-299-3188**

Access Code: **2025648322#**

FINAL AGENDA

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| 2:00 – 2:05 | Roll Call |
| 2:05 – 2:10 | January business meeting minutes distributed for review and finalized |
| 2:10 – 2:20 | Caucus Report Outs <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Tribal Caucus—Jeff Mears○ EPA Caucus—Ted Coopwood |
| 2:20 – 2:30 | TSC Spring Business Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Dates: June 12–14, 2012○ Proposed locations in Region 9 (ranking low to high cost)<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sparks, NV (possible tribal hosts: Reno Colony Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, or Washoe and Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribes)➤ Las Vegas, NV (possible tribal host: Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe)➤ Palm Springs, CA |
| 2:30 – 2:40 | Preparation for the TSC Spring Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Key Components:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Framework for Implementation of Tribal Science Priorities➤ Tribal EcoAmbassadors Program➤ Training: Grant Writing Tools (Tribal Caucus)/Cultural, Treaties and Laws (EPA Caucus)➤ TSC Organizational Overview Document |
| 2:40 – 2:45 | Update on Region 8 Regional Operations Committee (ROC) Meeting and Tribal ecoAmbassadors Program (Patti Tyler, EPA Region 8) |
| 2:45 – 2:55 | K–12 School Environmental Health Program for States, Tribes and Territories (Margot Brown, EPA Office of Children’s Health Protection) |
| 2:55 – 3:00 | Announcement(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ National Tribal Caucus Climate Change Adaptation Workgroup is underway, and TSC representation is being determined○ Next Tribal Consultation Webinars on EPA’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan: March 1 and 8, 2012 |

Next conference call: *March 19, 2012, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. EST*